



Town of Garner NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 10, 2015

Media Contact: Rick Mercier,
Communications Manager
Phone: (919) 773-4418
Email: rmercier@garnernc.gov

Town Awarded \$217,500 Grant for Rec Center

The Town of Garner has been selected to receive a grant from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) in the amount of \$217,500, which will be applied toward construction of the Town's new recreation center.

PARTF provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments for parks and recreational projects to serve the public. It is a primary source of funding to build and renovate facilities and parks, as well as to buy land for new and existing parks.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Director Sonya Shaw, responsible for coordinating public meetings, compiling grant supporting documents, working with project consultants and completing the grant application for the project, said, "It's a blessing to receive \$217,500 in grant dollars for the new recreation center, given the limited amount of funding available through PARTF."

When the project was initially submitted and recommended for a grant in 2013, remaining PARTF funding was less than \$35,000. Instead of accepting this amount, the department resubmitted for funding in 2014 and was awarded the \$217,500 matching grant. "Patience and timing were key in acquiring this grant," Shaw said.

The Town was one of 67 applicants requesting over \$12.6 million in funding, with only \$4,897,000 available for distribution during the 2014-15 grant cycle.

"The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department worked diligently with the public, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, programming partners and Town staff to demonstrate strong public support for the project. We are proud to be recipients of this grant," said Assistant Town Manager-Operations Rodney Dickerson.

Construction on the recreation center, to be located at the corner of Main and Montague streets in historic downtown Garner, is expected to begin in spring 2016 and be completed in fall 2017. In addition to the PARTF grant, funding for the facility will come from a \$2.5 million donation by ConAgra, parks and recreational bonds approved by Garner voters in 2013 and reserve funds set aside by the Town. The center will be 40,000 square feet and have three high-school-size gymnasiums, three multipurpose rooms and an elevated indoor walking track.

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The North Carolina General Assembly established the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund in 1994 to fund improvements in the state's park system, to fund grants for local governments and to increase the public's access to the state's beaches.

The Parks and Recreation Authority, a nine-member appointed board, was also created to allocate funds from PARTF to the state parks and to the grants program for local governments. The board consists of three members appointed by the governor, including the chairperson; three members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate; and three members appointed by the speaker of the House.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources administers PARTF grant awards via a contract with the grant recipient.

For more information, contact the Garner Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department at (919) 773-4442.

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